THE ROYAL TUTOR

Chapter 45

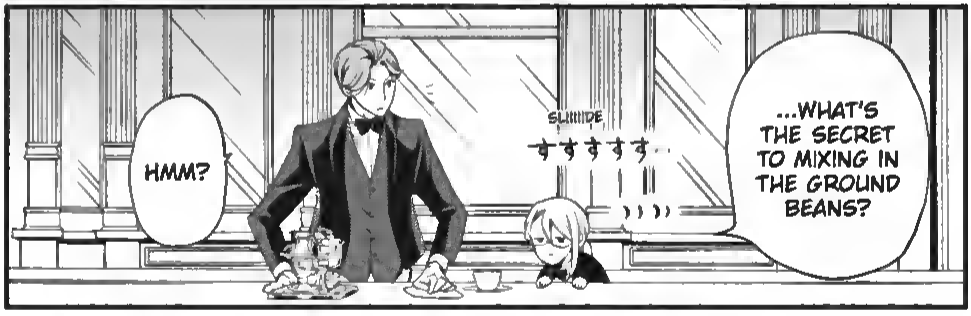
Higasa Akai

I'LL NEED YOU TO ESCORT ME TWO MORNINGS IN A ROW. SORRYYY!
HARRUMPH!
...NEXT TIME, I WISH YOU WOULD FIND AN EXCUSE TO REFUSE.
YOU ACCEPT ALL SHIFTS PRESSED UPON YOU.. GOODNESS GRACIOUS.

Chapter 45
Doubt and Suspicion

ARE YOU DEPARTING FOR AN EXTRA LESSON AGAIN?
YOU DISAPPEAR SO OFTEN. WHERE IS IT THAT YOU GO?
MAY I JOIN YOU?
ERRRM...
.....
NOPE. 'COS THIS IS A SPECIAL LESSON ALLLL FOR ME! TOODLE-OOOO!!
ZOOOM

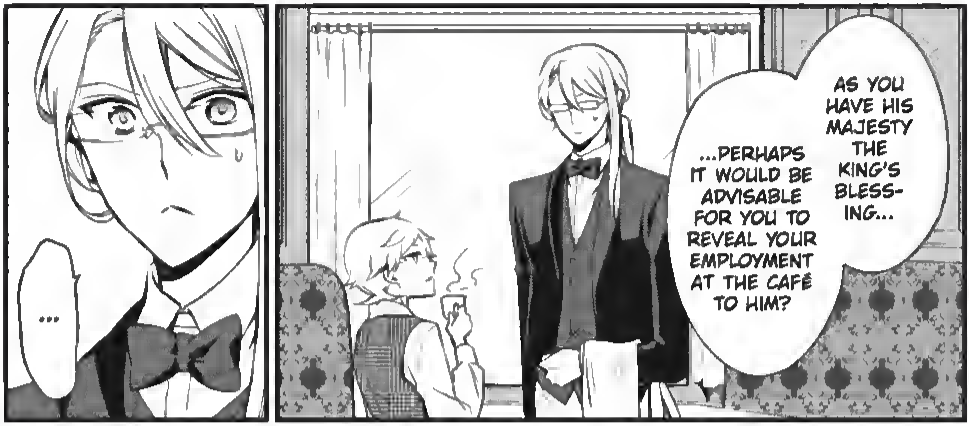
A SPECIAL LESSON...?
KOFF!
.....
GOT IT. THANKS.
ALL RIGHT, I'M GOING TO PUT OUT THE OPEN SIIIGN!
YES, PLEASE.
WILL YOU BE HAVING YOUR USUAL MÉLANGE?
RICH'S LITTLE BROTHER! ANOTHER DAY OF STUDYING AT OUR CAFÉ, EH?
AND I AM NOT HIS LITTLE BROTHER.


HMM?
SLIIIIIDE
すすすすす…
...WHAT'S THE SECRET TO MIXING IN THE GROUND BEANS?

AH, THAT WAS TOO MANY TURNS. AND YOU'RE TOO ROUGH.
LIKE THIS?
HRRM...

STIR
STIR
YOU PRACTICE WITH WATER
...YOU STIR WITH A QUICK AND LIGHT HAND.
WHILE BEING SURE TO BLEND THE ENTIRE MIXTURE EVENLY...

YES, YES. PLEASE ADD MILK TO THIS AND TAKE IT OUT.
I'LL WATCH YOU VEEERY CLOSELY AND STEAL YOUR TECHNIQUE, I WILL...
THANK YOU.
YOUR MÉLANGE!
...I MUST SAY...
CLINK
GLOOM
PRINCE BRUNO MUST HAVE BEEN QUITE BEWILDERED...
I DO HOPE HE DOES NOT DRAW ANY STRANGE CONCLUSIONS, SUCH AS THAT WE ARE AVOIDING HIM...


...
...PERHAPS IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE FOR YOU TO REVEAL YOUR EMPLOYMENT AT THE CAFÉ TO HIM?
AS YOU HAVE HIS MAJESTY THE KING'S BLESSING...

WELL, IF FATHER PERMITS IT..
I THINK HE'D TOLERATE IT, SINCE I HAVE FATHER'S APPROVAL.

HE JUST LOOOVES TO NAG ME!!
THAT SAID IF I MAY, STATE MY PERSONAL OPINION
WORKING IN THE CITY? A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL FAMILY WORKING?
YOU SHOULD RET TH
...HE WOULD SOOO COMPLAIN ABOUT IT ALL THE TIME!
BUT EVEN AS HE SAYS HE ACCEPTS IT...
.....

HMM MMooo
LEONIE CAN'T KEEP A SECRET...
HE'D SPILL THE BEANS TO BRUNIE BEFORE THE DAY WAS OUT.
LEONHARD
WHAT OF SHARING YOUR SECRET WITH YOUR OTHER BROTHERS, THEN?
KAI
WAAH!
EYES → ARE DEAD WHEN STUDYING THINGS HE HATES
I-I'M NOT HIDING ANYTHING~!!
STARE
AREN'T YOU GOING TO COME AFTER ME...?
AH YES... HE DOES ALWAYS WEAR HIS HEART ON HIS SLEEVE.
LEONHARD'S HISTORY OF EMOTIONAL DISPLAYS
EVEN IF HE DIDN'T LET IT SLIP...
...I THINK HE'D WORRY ABOUT ME...
DREAM
DREAM
I BELIEVE PRINCE KAI WOLILD BE MOST DISCREET.
NOR WOULD IT SHOW ON HIS FACE..
NOPE, NOT GONNA HAPPEN!

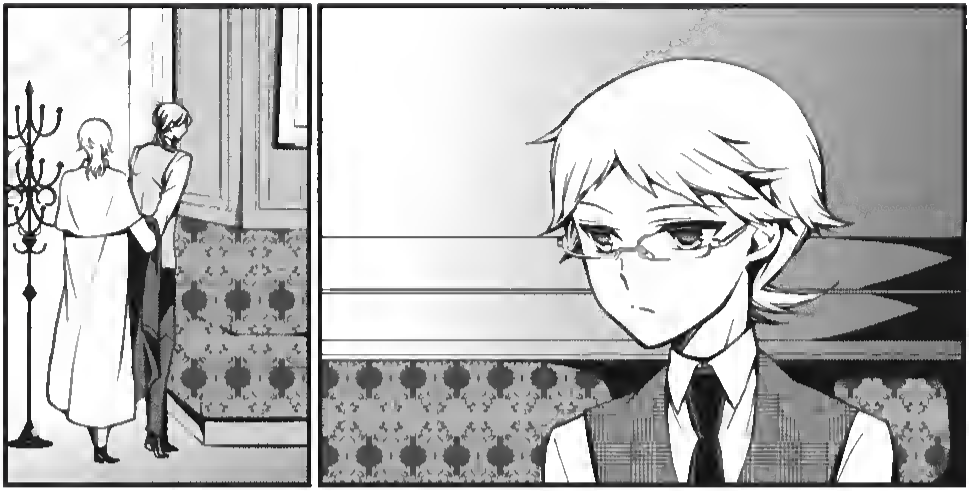
I MEAN, IF YOU WANT..
INDEED!
I WANT TO GO SEE THE CAFÉ TOO...WITH TEACHER...
LICHT... I'M WORRIED...
BLUSH
OH MY GOODNESS. MAYBE HE HAS A SOFT SPOT FOR CHILDREN...
SWOON
PET ふに
PET ふに
PET ふに
GLARE
キロッ
EEK!
SCARY!
SUCH A VIVID IMAGINATION.
WHAT IF HE ENDED UP MORE POPULAR WITH THE LADIES HERE THAN MEEE!?
THEY'D BE ALL, "I ASSUMED HE WAS A GRUFF, SCARY GUY, BUT HE WAS KIND-HEARTED ALL ALONG! ♡"
AAAA
AAAAH!
TREATING ME AS A CHILD!
HMPH!

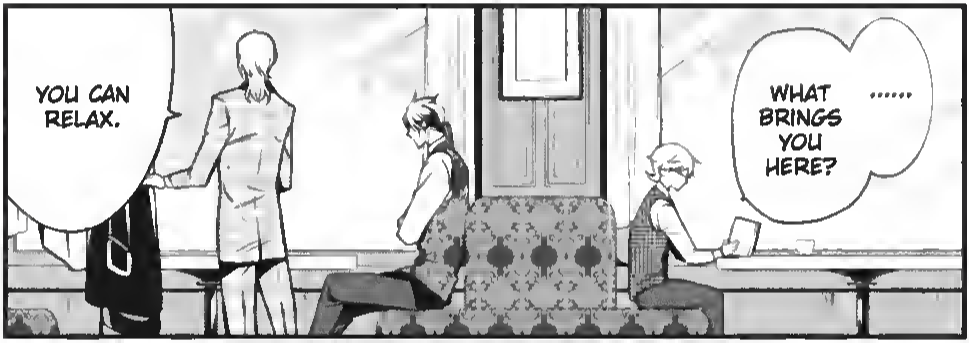
I'D HATE FOR MY FAMILY TO WATCH ME AT WORK.
IT WOULD BE SO MORTIFYING ...
...AND AWKWARD, I GUESS...
I HAVE THE SENSE THAT YOUR HIGHNESS IS OVERTHINKING THIS.
A-ANYHOO, POPULARITY ASIDE ...!
I SEE...
...IS THAT HOW IT IS?
THAT'S HOW IT IS!
I WOULDN'T KNOW HOW TO ACT.
PERSONALLY, I'D RATHER THEY NEVER FOUND OUT!
WELCOME
—
CREAK

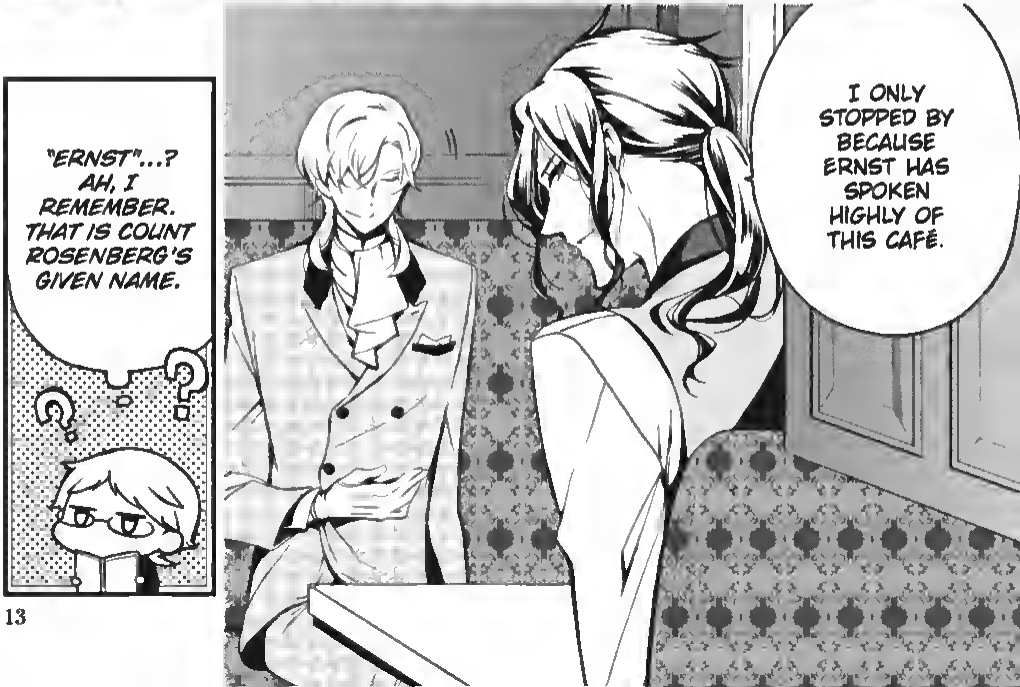
STEP

WE THOUGHT WE'D DROP IN.
!!!?

HMM? WHAT'S THE MATTER?
EI—
.....
EI...
EINS...
.....
CRASH
STAGGER
SWAY
COME ON, GO CHANGE INTO A DRY UNIFORM!
WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SPLOSH




YOU CAN RELAX.
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
.....

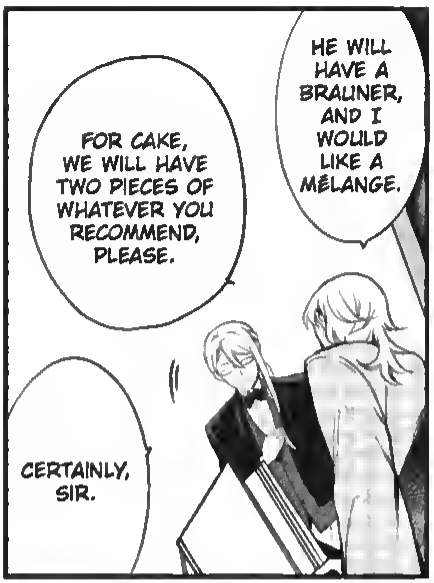

"ERNST"...? AH, I REMEMBER. THAT IS COUNT ROSENBERG'S GIVEN NAME.
I ONLY STOPPED BY BECAUSE ERNST HAS SPOKEN HIGHLY OF THIS CAFÉ.

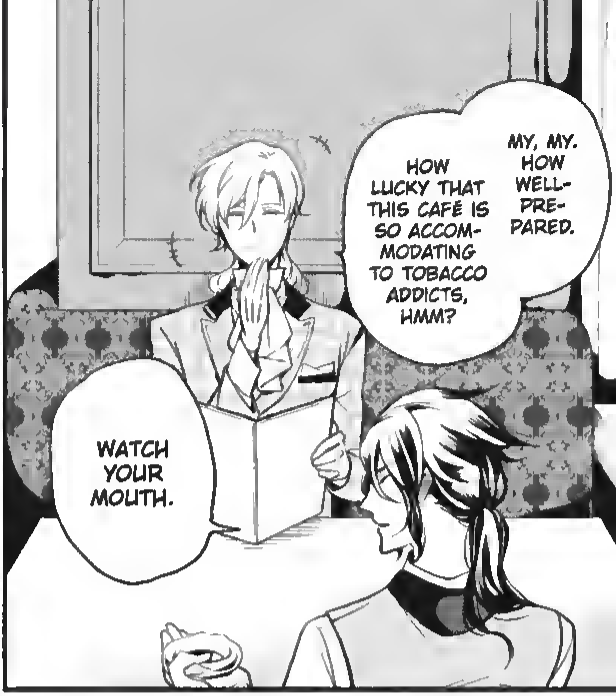
ITS ATMOSPHERE AND MENU ARE VERY FINE INDEED...
...I CAN CERTAINLY UNDERSTAND WHY YOU WOULD WISH TO RETURN TO THIS ESTABLISH-MENT.
YES, THAT IS ANOTHER POINT IN ITS FAVOR.
MURMUR
...AND IT IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO CHECK ON PRINCE LICHT'S PROGRESS.
.....

...WHY...?
WHERE DO THOSE TWO GET OFF, BARGING INTO SOMEONE'S WORK-PLACE !?
WILL YOU TAKE ME ON AS A WORKER
FOR A SHORT WHILE?
AT LEAST EINS HAD ENOUGH CONSIDERATION TO DRESS DOWN SO HE WOULDN'T STAND OUT...
WE THOUGHT WE'D DROP IN.
HE'S HERE TO CENSURE ME, ISN'T HE?
BUT I CAN'T EXACTLY CHASE HIM OUT, SINCE HE'S A CUSTOMER...

.....
THAT'S RIGHT. HE MAY BE FAMILY, BUT ABOVE ALL, HE'S A CUSTOMER.
AS A PROFESSIONAL, I HAVE TO DEDICATE MYSELF TO DOING A GOOD JOB OF WAITING ON HIM.
IF I DO ANYTHING SLOPPILY, I'LL BE LETTING THE MASTER DOWN.
TUG
...I'M READY.

WELCOME, SIRS.
HERE IS OUR MENU.
...
...
AFTER ALL, I KNOW HOW YOU ENJOY YOUR TOBACCO, SIR.
SWISH
I BROUGHT YOU AN ASHTRAY AS WELL.


HE WILL HAVE A BRALINER, AND I WOULD LIKE A MÉLANGE.
FOR CAKE, WE WILL HAVE TWO PIECES OF WHATEVER YOU RECOMMEND, PLEASE.
CERTAINLY, SIR.


MY, MY. HOW WELL-PRE-PARED.
HOW LUCKY THAT THIS CAFÉ IS SO ACCOM-MODATING TO TOBACCO ADDICTS, HMM?
WATCH YOUR MOUTH.

.....

HUH ...?
HEE-HEE! YOU ALWAYS WORK SO HARD, DEAR.
I GAVE YOU A LITTLE EXTRA TIP. TAKE IT.
RICH, DEAR! CHECK, PLEASE!
YES, MA'AM!
I'M ALWAYS HAPPY TO SEE YOU, MS. MARIA.
OH, BUT THIS IS SIMPLY TOO MUCH.
PLEASE, KEEP IT— AND COME BACK AGAIN SOON.
OH MY! EVER THE FLATTERER.
WAIT JUST A MINUTE, AND I'LL BRING YOU A NEW EINSPÄNNER, SHALL I?
SWIFT
SHWP
DID IT SPLASH ON YOU? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
AH!
CRASH
RIIIIICH!
TH-THANK YOU SO MUCH...
I'M SORRY FOR THE BOTHER.

IT'S READY. CAN YOU CARRY IT ALL?
THIS IS NOTH-ING! ♪
THANK YOU FOR WAITING, SIRS.
ONE BRAUNER, ONE MÉLANGE...
CLINK
...AND FOR MY RECOMMEN-DATION, TWO PIECES OF KASETORTE.

...SOME OF THE CAKES WE OFFER, SUCH AS THE SACHERTORTE, REQUIRE SPECIAL EXPERTISE TO MAKE.
WE MUST ORDER THEM FROM CONFECTIONARIES TO SERVE THEM HERE.
IS THERE ANY PARTICULAR REASON YOU CHOSE THIS TORTE?
.....

HOWEVER, THIS SIMPLE KASETORTE IS MADE AT OUR OWN CAFÉ.
THE MASTER BAKES FRESH ONES EVERY MORNING.

I SEE.
HOWEVER ...
...I TRY TO INTRODUCE FIRST-TIME PATRONS TO OUR CAFÉ'S PARTICULAR TASTE, IF POSSIBLE.
WE DO, OF COURSE, ALSO CONFIDENTLY RECOMMEND THE SPECIALTY SHOPS WE ORDER FROM.

...
DESPITE BEING A CHILD ...
...IT SEEMS YOU'RE DECENT AT YOUR JOB.
...

ERNST HAS EXPLAINED THE SITUATION TO ME.
AS A ROYAL, YOU SHOULD KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS RECKLESS.

IT IS NOT PRAISE-WORTHY BEHAVIOR AT ALL.

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY.
THERE'S NO WAY I'LL LEAVE THIS CAFÉ...!
—!
LOOK... FATHER PERMITTED THIS.
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO BUTT IN.
YOUR HIGH-NESS...

FINE BY ME.

FWOOO
.....
HUH?

...IS AN INSULT TO THE PEOPLE.
...WHO HAS THE NERVE TO PLAY AT WORKING IN TOWN, WHERE HE DOESN'T BELONG...
...THAT A KNOW-NOTHING, PAMPERED, RICH BRAT...
IT'S COMMON SENSE...
OH DEAR...
I CAME WITH THE EXPRESS INTENT OF MAKING YOU QUIT IMMEDIATELY IF YOU WERE PUTTING AN UNNECESSARY BURDEN ON THE PEOPLE.
YOU'RE PAMPERED AND RICH TOO, AREN'T YOU!?
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO TAKE IT THAT FAR...!!
...SHOWS YOU ARE POLISHED ENOUGH AT THE JOB THAT AT LEAST YOU AREN'T A NUISANCE.
...THE WAY YOU ATTEND TO YOUR PATRONS AND YOUR TECHNIQUE AS A WAITER...
HOWEVER, JUDGING BY WHAT I'VE SEEN TODAY...

.....!
DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.
...IN WHICH CASE, IT IS AS YOU SAY. THIS IS NONE OF MY BUSINESS.
...YOU'LL HAVE ONE FEWER RIVAL FOR THE THRONE.
YOU'RE ONLY SAYING THAT BECAUSE YOU THINK IF I'M ABSORBED WITH MY WORK AT THE CAFÉ...
WHA!?
HA!
YOU THINK I CONSIDER A BRAT LIKE YOU TO BE A RIVAL?

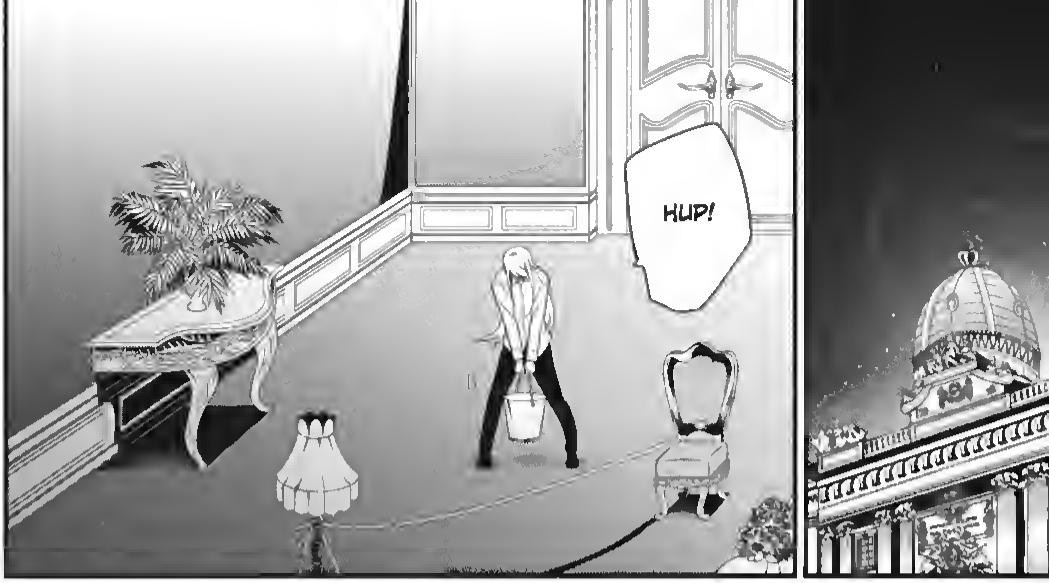
NOW, NOW, PRINCE EINS!
HERR RICH...
STOP CALLING ME A BRAT!
I'M FOURTEEN!
SUCH A BRAT, HAVING THE CHEEK TO ASSUME YOU'RE ON MY LEVEL...
HMPH
WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY!?
THERE IS NO NEED TO BITE HIS HEAD OFF, NOW, IS THERE?
AS WE ARE HERE, LET'S TRY HIS RECOMMENDATION, SHALL WE?
...A-AHEM. I'M VERY GLAD TO HEAR THAT IT IS TO YOUR LIKING, SIR.
ACK!
DOESN'T IT? THE MASTER IS A GENIUS!
THE CHEESE IS RICH AND PAIRS WELL WITH THE COFFEE.
OH, HOW DELICIOUS!
EH HEH!

I AM AFRAID I MUST ATTEND TO MY WORK.
CARE TO TRY A BITE, PROFES-SOR?
DASH
LOOK, LEAVE AS SOON AS YOU FINISH EATING, WILL YOU?
ONE MOMENT, SIR!
WAITER!
AH-HA-HA... SOME-THING LIKE THAT...
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT? YOU WERE CHATTING WITH THEM FOR A LONG WHILE... FRIENDS OF YOURS?
.....
.....

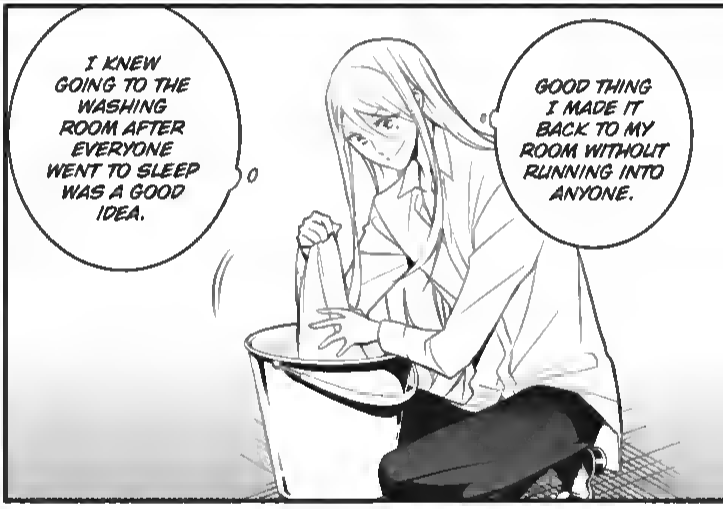
WE'RE LEAVING.
THIS REALLY IS AN EXCELLENT CAFÉ.
THAT WAS DELIGHTFUL.
IT WASN'T BAD.
IF I FEEL LIKE IT, I SUPPOSE I MIGHT COME AGAIN.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND WORDS!
DON'T EVER COME AGAIN!
IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US, PROFESSOR.

パタン
SHUT
...GUH.
WHAT'S HIS PROBLEM?
THINKING I CAN'T DO MY JOB...
...WELL, YEAH.
IT SOUNDED AS THOUGH HIS HIGHNESS ACKNOWLEDGED YOUR SKILL IN THE END.
IT IS FORTUNATE THAT HE DID NOT FIND A REASON TO DISPUTE THE MATTER, IS IT NOT?

TAP
とんとん
TAP
NOT ONLY AM I A HANDSOME WAITER, I'M A CLEVER, THOUGHTFUL, PERFECT PROFESSIONAL! WHO WOULD EVER COMPLAIN ABOUT ME—
HMPH! OF COURSE HE COULDN'T COMPLAIN!
!
...ACCIDENTS HAPPEN...
...BUT I THINK YOU'RE TOOTING YOUR OWN HORN A BIT MUCH.
I'M A BUSY MAN, YOU KNOW. YOU CAUSED THIS AWFUL STAIN, SO YOU CAN TAKE IT HOME AND GET IT OUT YOURSELF.
URK! SORRYYY!


HUP!

UMM, UMM.
OR THAT ONE?
THIS ONE?
WILL THIS SOAP WORK?
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING, BUT IT CAME OUT, SO...OH WELL?


I KNEW GOING TO THE WASHING ROOM AFTER EVERYONE WENT TO SLEEP WAS A GOOD IDEA.
GOOD THING I MADE IT BACK TO MY ROOM WITHOUT RUNNING INTO ANYONE.

I'M KIND OF RELIEVED, HEH...
EINS IS HARDHEADED... I FIGURED HE CAME BY TODAY TO MAKE ME QUIT BY WHATEVER MEANS POSSIBLE...

.....

I'VE GOTTEN USED TO PRACTICING MAKING COFFEE TOO. AND YET AFTER ALL THAT...
I'VE LEARNED TO INTERACT WITH PATRONS AND TO RECOGNIZE THEM...I STUDY ALL SORTS OF THINGS TO MAKE CONVERSATION...
'COS... I'D HATE TO QUIT RIGHT NOW.
SQUEEZE
...I'M STILL SO FAR FROM CATCHING UP TO THE MASTER... I CAN'T QUIT NOW...

.....
...HUH?

I'M WORKING AT THE CAFÉ TO LEARN ABOUT CITY LIFE...I...
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT.
I WANT TO BE LIKE THE MASTER ...?
WE ONLY HAVE SO MUCH TIME ON THIS EARTH. IF YOU'RE ABLE TO SPEND YOUR LIFE DOING SOMETHING YOU LOVE...
...WHY, I CAN'T THINK OF A BETTER RECIPE FOR HAPPINESS.
...I'M A SIMPLE MAN, REALLY.
THE MORE TIME I GET TO SPEND DOING THE THINGS I ENJOY, THE HAPPIER I FEEL.
.....

NO! I CAN'T THINK LIKE THAT. I'M A PRINCE.
I WANT TO BE LIKE THAT TOO...
.....
AFTER THAT TALK WITH FATHER, WHEN I FINALLY DECIDED I WANTED TO BECOME A MAN LIKE HIM... I REALLY MEANT IT...SO WHY...?

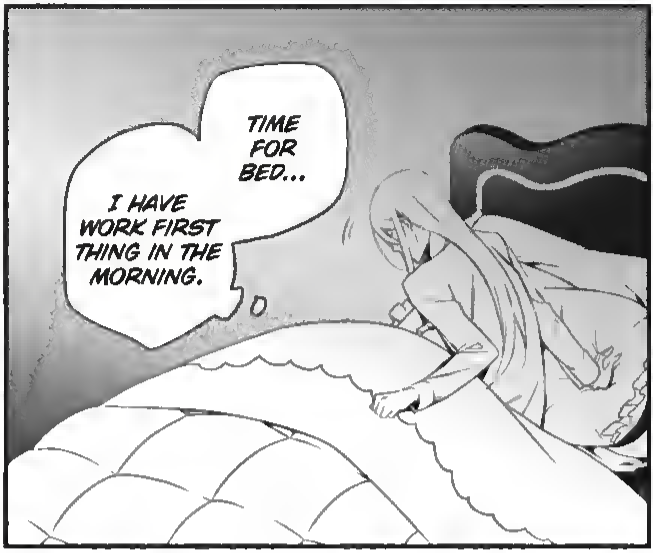
WHY...?
.....
—CHT...
GASP!
LICHT?

.....
AH...
.....
U-UHH...
.....
HE SAW MY UNIFORM... OH NO... I HAVE TO PLAY IT OFF SOMEHOW...
HE WAS WATCHING ME...? FOR HOW LONG?

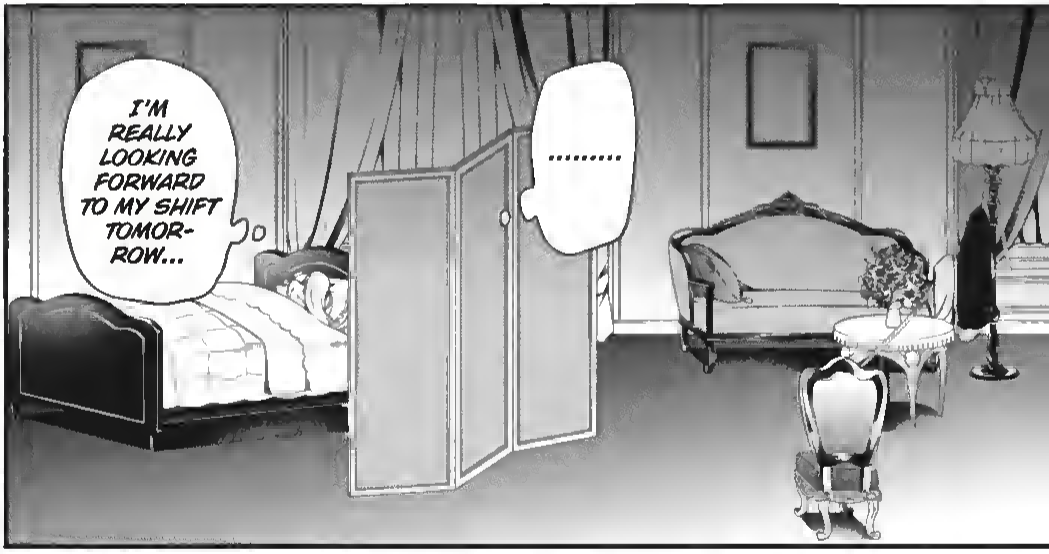
HUH!?
I SEE NOTHING IS OUT OF SORTS AFTER ALL... GOODNESS.
IN ANY CASE, I WISHED TO ASK YOU A QUESTION CONCERNING MASTER.
I KNOCKED SEVERAL TIMES.
WHEN YOU DID NOT ANSWER, I GREW WORRIED.
THEREFORE, I CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT I DO NOT RECEIVE THESE SPECIAL LESSONS BECAUSE I AM INFERIOR TO YOU IN SOME WAY...!!
THIS MORNING, YOU SAID YOU WERE LEAVING FOR A "SPECIAL LESSON" JUST FOR YOU.
HOWEVER, I SIMPLY CANNOT SEE MASTER GIVING YOU PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT IN OUR STUDIES.
WHO'S A GOOD BOY?
.....
AHH...

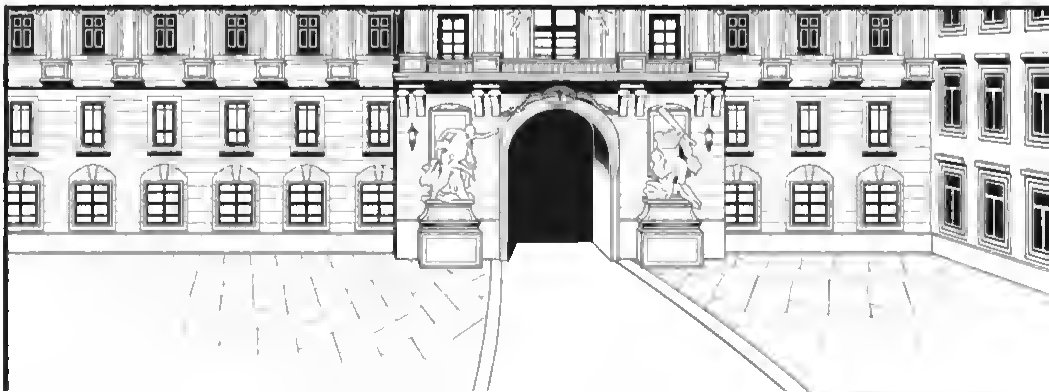
GEEEEZ, STOP OVER-THINKING!
OKAY, BACK TO YOUR ROOM, BACK TO YOUR ROOM.
SHOVE
SHOVE
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT, DON'T.
YOU'RE COM-PLETELY OFF THE MARK.
WHAT!?
TRULY!?
BYE-BYE!
G'NIGHT!
SLAM
.....
HE ALMOST GAVE ME A HEART ATTACK ...

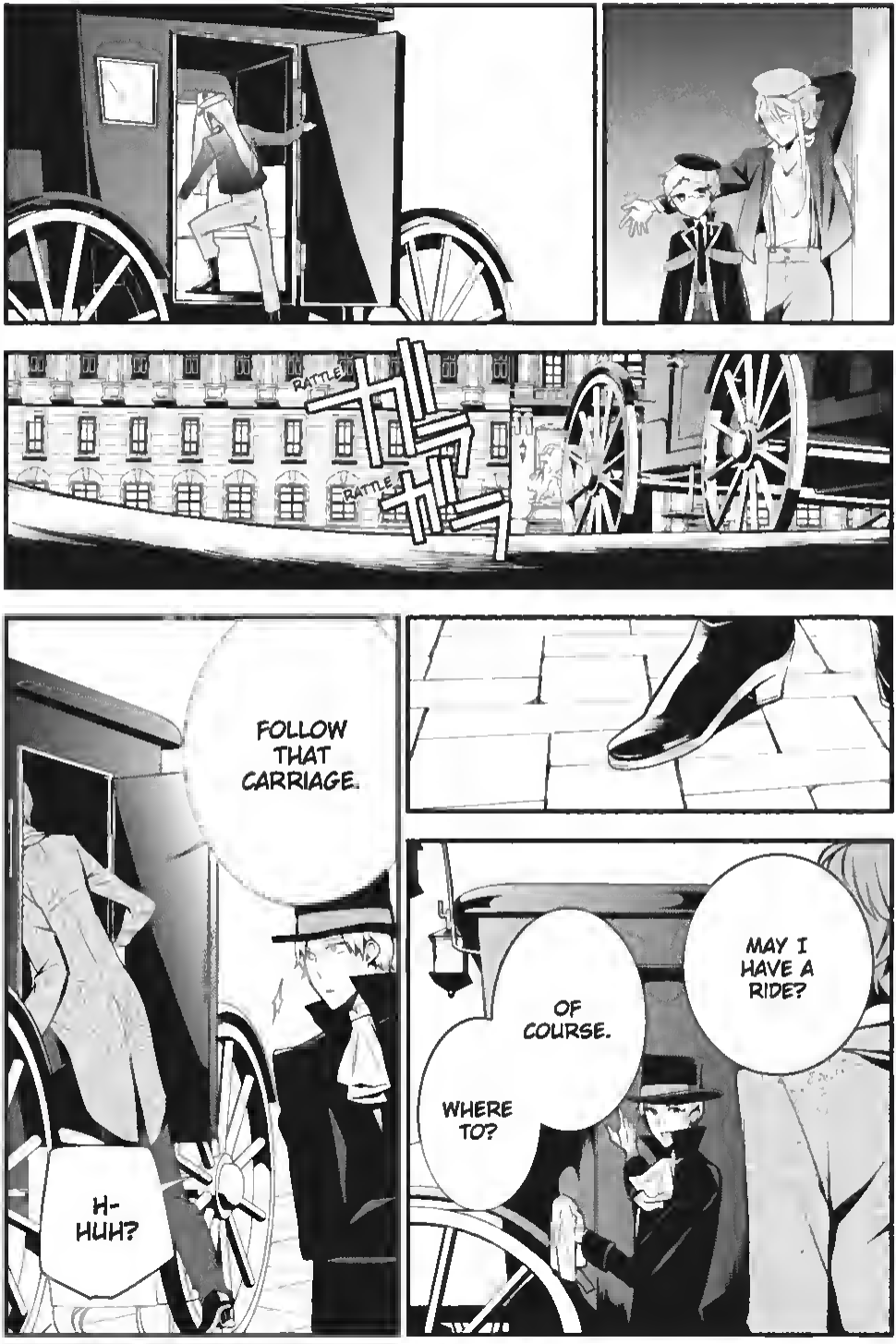
AH!
I WAS SO DEEP IN THOUGHT THAT I DIDN'T EVEN HEAR HIM...
OHHH MAAAN. AM I AN IDIOT OR WHAT!?
—WAIT, HE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THE UNIFORM...
.....
さっ
SHWOOP
.....
MAYBE HE COULDN'T MAKE IT OUT BECAUSE IT'S DARK IN HERE...I GOT LUCKY...
PHEW...


TIME FOR BED...
I HAVE WORK FIRST THING IN THE MORNING.

YAWN...


I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO MY SHIFT TOMOR-ROW...
.....




RATTLE
RATTLE
FOLLOW THAT CARRIAGE.
H-HUH?
MAY I HAVE A RIDE?
OF COURSE.
WHERE TO?

.....
LICHT
...
To be cootinued in the oext chapter of The Royal Tutor

The Royal Tutor Chapter 45

Higasa Akai

Translation: Amanda Haley • Lettering: Abigail Blackman

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